

# **2002 W.P.D.E.S. Permit Satisfaction Survey**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## The Study

This report presents the results of the 2002 Water Pollutant Discharge Elimination Discharge System (WPDES) Survey of those who received a WPDES permit. The study was conducted to measure permit applicants' satisfaction with the permitting process. The survey paid particular attention to applicants' views on how quickly DNR staff answered their questions and to how well staff resolved problems that arose. The study itself is part of the Department of Natural Resources' larger Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) which calls on programs to monitor the satisfaction of their customers.

## Methods

The results presented in this report are drawn from a booklet-style 16 page mailed questionnaire. The survey was conducted in October 2002 and was sent to facilities that had received a WPDES permit in the year prior to the survey. These facilities are categorized as major and minor industrial facilities, and major and minor municipal facilities. The questionnaire was developed using information gathered from interviews with six facilities and one consultant. WPDES program staff also contributed to the design of the questionnaire, adding questions and supplying needed details. This survey achieved a response rate of 82 percent.

## Principal Findings

Applicants' satisfaction with their WPDES permit process can be divided into three parts: satisfaction with the staff who helped them, satisfaction with the application process, and satisfaction with the permit that resulted from this process.

The survey found that WPDES applicants were highly satisfied with the performance of the DNR staff who processed their permits. Respondents uniformly described staff as courteous, knowledgeable, helpful and accessible. While they appreciated the DNR's helpful staff, it is more important to them that staff know WPDES permit rules. Additionally, most respondents were satisfied with how DNR staff addressed their problems and answered their questions.

In terms of the application process, respondents were highly satisfied with the time allowed to complete the application, the quality and amount of DNR support, and the helpfulness and clarity of instructions. They were slightly less satisfied with the amount of information required to submit with their application. Most municipal applicants said they preferred to receive and submit paper applications. Conversely, most industry applicants preferred to receive and submit electronic applications. When asked for

principal sources of information used to complete their applications, most reported that they relied on permit application instructions and on DNR staff.

For the most part, WPDES permit applicants were satisfied with the final permit itself. Some, however, expressed concern over the costs associated with permit compliance, and, to a lesser extent, over permit limits.

The next page provides a quick snapshot of survey results and their relationship to the SIP objectives.

The 2002 WPDES Permit Program Survey provides baseline measurements of customer satisfaction, DNR staff resolution of problems, and staff response times to questions.

ISSUE		2002 BASELINE	RELATIONSHIP TO GOAL
		Percent Satisfied*	Difference: baseline and 85% satisfaction
<b>Satisfaction with DNR staff who processed permit</b>			
Overall satisfaction with DNR staff who processed permit		93%	+8%
Courtesy		97%	+12%
Knowledge of WPDES permit rules		97%	+12%
Accessibility		94%	+9%
Helpfulness		91%	+6%
Knowledge of facility		87%	+2%
<b>Satisfaction with aspects of application process</b>			
Overall satisfaction with WPDES application process		91%	+6%
Time to complete application		95%	+10%
Quality of DNR support		93%	+8%
Helpfulness of instructions		92%	+7%
Clarity of instructions		92%	+7%
Amount of DNR support		92%	+7%
Terms clearly defined		90%	+5%
Ease of application process		88%	+3%
Flexibility in permit negotiations		84%	-1%
Amount of information required to submit		82%	-3%
<b>Satisfaction with attributes of WPDES permit</b>			
Ease of understanding permit		94%	+9%
Ease of identifying changes		88%	+3%
Permit conditions fair and consistent		85%	0%
<b>Satisfaction with engineer visit performance attributes</b>			
Overall satisfaction with DNR engineer visit		96%	+11%
Courtesy		100%	+15%
Helpfulness		95%	+10%
Provision of information		94%	+9%
<b>Satisfaction with how DNR staff responds to problems</b>			
Overall satisfaction with how staff addressed problem		74%	<b>Goal: increase ability to gently let down disappointed customers by 5% each year through 2007.</b>
Staff courtesy		98%	
Respectful manner of staff response		96%	
Staff available to respond to problem		87%	
Effort of staff to respond to problem		87%	
Problem addressed in timely manner		77%	
Got most of what was needed		54%	
<b>Staff response time to questions. The percentages below show actual compared to expected response times.</b>			
Actual response was sooner than expected		34%	<b>Goal: decrease response time by 20% by 2005.</b>
Actual response came when expected		55	
Actual response was later than expected		11	

\*Percent 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'.



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- Appendix A DNR Strategic Implementation Plan Objectives
- Appendix B Survey Results by Facility Type





# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **Purpose**

This report presents the results of the 2002 survey of Water Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) permit applicants. The study was conducted to measure applicants' satisfaction with the WPDES permit process. The survey also measured how quickly DNR staff responded to applicants' questions, and explored how effectively staff resolved problems that arose during the permitting process.

## **Background**

This study was undertaken in response to the DNR's Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP). The plan calls on the agency to monitor customer satisfaction, to measure response times to customer questions/concerns, and to measure how well DNR staff resolve applicants' problems/complaints. See Appendix A for the exact wording of the SIP objectives.

The questions asked by the SIP only make sense when the person answering them has had a direct, intense interaction with the agency. Permit applications provide such an experience. They are often complex and sometimes contentious. Problems arise and must be resolved. Similarly, applicants often have questions that DNR staff must answer. More generally, applicants are able to form a coherent picture of how the DNR's regulations intersect with their facility and its operations. Thus the application process provides an ideal setting for judging the issues raised by the SIP. Those responding to this questionnaire experienced a recent, intense interaction with the DNR on an issue directly affecting their facility.

The WPDES program is the second program to be measured after the air operating permit program. The WPDES program regulates a diverse population of facilities. The four main categories of facilities included in this survey are major and minor industrial and major and minor municipal facilities<sup>1</sup>. Survey results are reported for the population as a whole, however, any differences among these groups are noted. For a more in-depth look at survey results by facility type, please refer to Appendix B.

## **Methods**

The results presented in this report are drawn from a mailed questionnaire of WPDES permit applicants. In October 2002, all Wisconsin facilities that received a WPDES permit between and including August 2001 and August 2002 were surveyed. WPDES permit applicants include municipalities, industry and DNR fish hatcheries. The 16-page booklet-style questionnaire was sent to the person in each facility that had primary

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<sup>1</sup> Two 'minor septic' facilities are included in the survey results as well.

responsibility for obtaining the permit. Standard mail survey procedures were used for three mailings: a cover letter with survey; a reminder post card; and a second letter with survey to nonrespondents. These methods produced an 82 percent response rate.

Researchers developed the survey using information gathered from several sources: interviews with facilities, with a consultant, and with WPDES program staff; previous WDNR surveys, and a review of a review of survey instruments used by other states<sup>2</sup>. Facility interviews allowed applicants to describe their experiences in their own words. This qualitative work is a necessary first step to understanding customer satisfaction. The interviews provided a basis for understanding customer concerns and for creating/designing the questionnaire. Additionally, interviews can provide some context and explanation for survey results. Italicized quotations from the interviews are used throughout this report.

## **Report Layout**

This report is divided into three sections, the first being the Introduction. Section II discusses the survey results and Section III focuses on how the survey addresses the DNR's SIP objectives.

## **Acknowledgments**

The researchers who undertook the SIP research wish to thank the Bureau of Watershed Management for their hearty cooperation with this project. We would particularly like to thank Watershed Bureau Director Al Shea, and Bob Weber and Mary Ryan for their enthusiastic advice and guidance while developing the survey.

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<sup>2</sup> Surveys from Maine, Oklahoma and Delaware measure satisfaction with staff courtesy, timeliness, knowledge and quality of service. Surveys from Missouri, North Carolina and Vermont measure satisfaction with the permitting process (EPA 2000).

## II. RESULTS

This section presents the results of the WPDES permit survey. It is organized as follows:

- Applicants' satisfaction with staff
- Satisfaction with the permit application process and with the final permit
- Application process and permit problems
- Problem resolution
- Experiences with inspection and permit writer site visits
- Perceptions of the timeliness of DNR staff response to questions and concerns
- Respondent suggestions for program improvement
- Respondent background

### **Results at a glance:**

#### **Satisfaction with DNR staff**

WPDES permit applicants were highly satisfied with the DNR staff they worked with most in the preparation of their permit. They gave the staff high marks for their knowledge and for their courtesy. They were somewhat less satisfied with the staff's knowledge of their facility. Regarding importance, applicants placed great importance on staff's knowledge of the rules governing wastewater discharge.

#### **Satisfaction with permit application process and actual permit**

Permit applicants were generally satisfied with the WPDES permit application process. The survey identified nine different dimensions to this process ranging from DNR staff knowledge to helpfulness of application instructions. For six of these, ninety percent or more applicants described themselves as 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'.

As for the permit itself, most applicants say they were satisfied that they could understand it and that they could identify changes. Finally, most applicants said they preferred receiving and submitting paper applications.

#### **Problems and problem solving**

The questionnaire presented applicants with a list of possible problems they might have experienced during the application process. The questionnaire then asked applicants to rate each problem as 'major', 'minor', or 'not a problem'. With respect to the application process, most reported only minor problems. The problem 'information required to submit' stands out as one most frequently mentioned.

Related to the permit, more than one-half said that they had no problem at all. Those with concerns about the final permit cited the costs associated with complying, discharge limits, and reporting requirements.

Approximately one-half of those who had a problem said they contacted the DNR about it. A majority of these, three-fourths, were satisfied with the way their problem was resolved. They characterized DNR staff's responses as timely and said that they got "most" or "some" of what they needed as a result of their contact. Only fourteen percent said they got "none" of what they needed as a result of their contact.

### **Satisfaction with site visits**

More applicants reported site visits by DNR engineers than reported visits by permit writers. While applicants believed that site visits by both types of DNR staff are important, they placed more importance on visits by DNR engineers. Those who experienced such visits say they are important. In contrast, fewer of those who did not experience site visits believed these visits are important.

### **Timely response to questions**

DNR staff respond in a timely manner to the questions they are asked. A resounding majority of those surveyed, over ninety percent, said that DNR staff responded to their questions in the time they expected or sooner.

### **Suggestions for improvement**

When asked what, if anything, the DNR could do to improve the WPDES permit program, applicants responded with a wide variety of suggestions. The most frequently raised suggestion was simplification of the application process. Other suggestions involved timing, better application instruction help, and providing the means for electronic application/reporting. Some applicants suggested that the program already works well.

## II.A. Applicants' Satisfaction with DNR Staff

***Facilities are satisfied with the staff they worked with most in preparation of their permit.***

The survey asked applicants about their experiences with DNR staff during the application process. They voiced overwhelming satisfaction with staff. Nine in ten applicants reported that they are satisfied overall with staff (see Table 1).

**Table 1. Overall satisfaction with DNR staff who processed permit**

	Percent*
Very satisfied	52%
Satisfied	41
Dissatisfied	7
Very dissatisfied	1

\*Numbers do not add to 100 because of rounding.

In addition to asking applicants about their overall satisfaction with DNR staff, we also asked them to rate the performance of the DNR staff they worked with most often during the application process. Figure 1 below shows respondents' satisfaction with specific aspects of staff performance. They give staff high marks for staff knowledge of WPDES rules and for courtesy. They are somewhat less satisfied with DNR staff's knowledge of their facility. Even here, however, almost nine in ten described themselves as 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'.

**Figure 1. Satisfaction with DNR staff who processed permit**

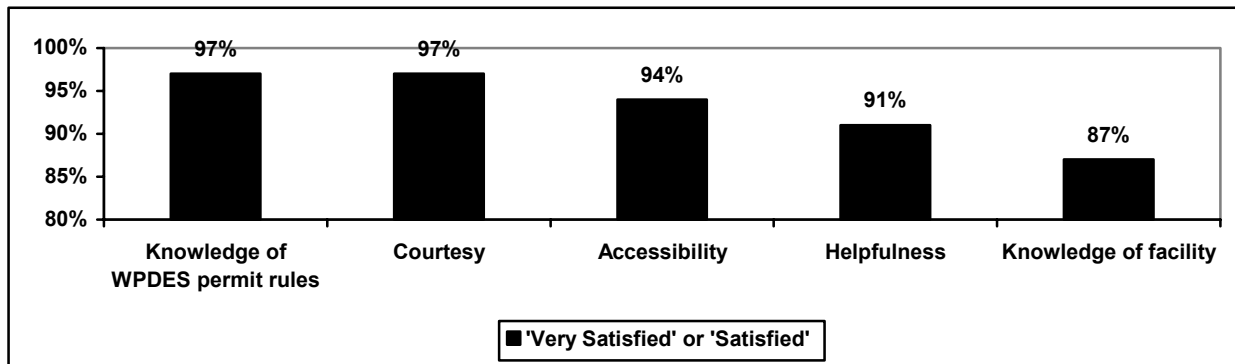


Table 2 below shows the detailed ratings of each of the staff performance attributes pictured above.

**Table 2. Staff satisfaction**

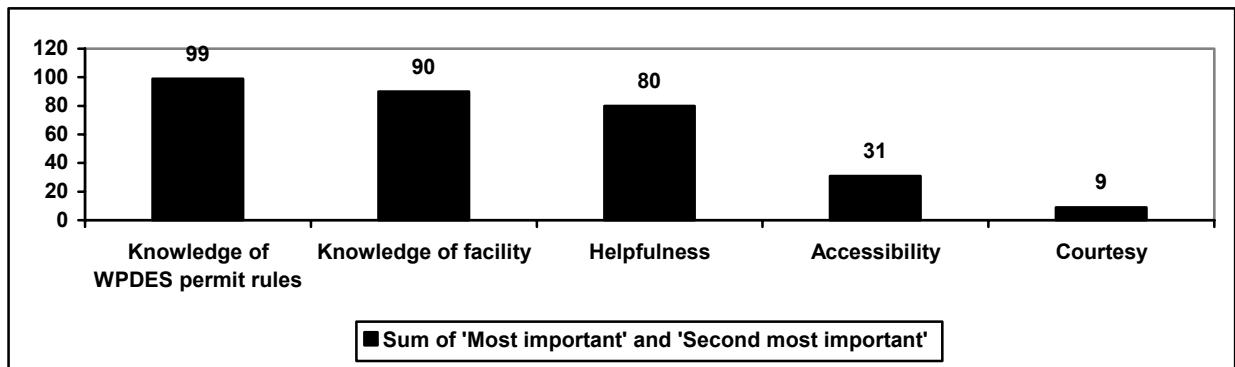
	<b>Percent</b>
<b>DNR staff knowledge of WPDES permit rules</b>	
Very satisfied	56%
Satisfied	42
Dissatisfied	1
Very dissatisfied	1
<b>DNR staff courtesy</b>	
Very satisfied	67%
Satisfied	30
Dissatisfied	2
Very dissatisfied	1
<b>DNR staff accessibility</b>	
Very satisfied	48%
Satisfied	46
Dissatisfied	3
Very dissatisfied	1
Don't know	2
<b>DNR staff helpfulness</b>	
Very satisfied	62%
Satisfied	29
Dissatisfied	7
Very dissatisfied	2
<b>DNR staff knowledge of facility</b>	
Very satisfied	40%
Satisfied	47
Dissatisfied	7
Very dissatisfied	2
Don't know	4

### ***Applicants value knowledge in the DNR people they work with.***

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The survey asked applicants to identify the two most important traits that DNR staff should have for processing WPDES permit applications. Figure 2 shows the sum of applicants' most important and second most important attributes. Clearly, applicants value the staff's knowledge of WPDES permit rules. Staff knowledge of applicants' facilities and staff helpfulness are also important. Although they are most satisfied with courtesy, applicants view this attribute as least important.

**Figure 2. Importance (most and second most) of staff attributes**



### ***Applicants appreciate helpful DNR staff.***

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The survey provided space for applicants to comment on their interactions with DNR staff during the permit process. Roughly one-fifth (22%) volunteered a comment. Most comments were positive. Applicants complimented DNR staff on their helpfulness. Others mentioned staff courtesy, staff explanations and knowledge. Respondents also commented on problems with staff and on problems with the permit program. Table 3 shows the general categories of respondent's comments.

**Table 3. Written comments about DNR staff interactions**

	<b>Percent<sup>1</sup></b>
Staff are helpful	33%
Other positive comments about staff	22
Issues with staff or program	31
Suggestions	11
Other	5

(1) Comments could be included in more than one category.

Some written comments are included below.

#### **Staff are helpful.**

Respondents said that DNR staff were generally helpful, and helpful in answering questions.

*The permit writer was very competent and extremely helpful. It was a real pleasure working with him.*

*Everyone was very helpful to get job done.*

*Was very helpful with questions about permit.*

#### **Other positive comments.**

In addition to helpfulness, respondents said that DNR staff were courteous, professional and willing to work on problems.

*The permit writer was very courteous. He followed DNR rules but was also courteous.*

*Professional service – high rank compared to other state DNR's/DEQs.*

*They are very willing to work with you on any problem you have.*

#### **Issues with staff and program**

The issues raised about staff and the WPDES program in general are as varied and diverse as the respondents who wrote them. Comments related to staff included: a new DNR staff person not yet fully knowledgeable, inconsistency between meetings and final



permit, delays, and failure to understand the limitations of time and money faced by small municipal treatment facilities.

*Person was new, so he was not fully knowledgeable of all rules.*

*Inconsistent with answers in meetings vs. what ended up in permit.*

*I also ask to meet with permit writer prior to issue of draft – but has not happened.*

*They don't understand the time and money limitations at small municipal facilities.*

Issues raised about the program include delays for an Appeal letter, the time associated with gathering permit information already on file, and a rigid review system.

*Permit requests information on file with the DNR. A lot of time is spent regathering this information. EG: site plans, process plans, outfall locations, etc.*

*Review of system deficiencies and compliance schedule too detailed and rigid; excluded opportunity for good and cost-effective engineering.*

## **Suggestions**

Most suggestions involved requests for various types of explanation.

*New parameters need to be fully explained and contacts for submitting samples need to be provided so that good data and proper procedures are maintained.*

*Explanation of permit changes and if there is ability to get variances or less restrictive limits and what is required to do so.*

*Visits to our facility can be important if there were some changes in the treatment process or you are planning some kind of change.*

***Applicants worked most with local DNR engineers and permit writers.***

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We asked applicants to identify whom within the DNR they worked with most during the permit application process. Roughly nine tenths of applicants worked with local or regional DNR staff during the permit application process (see Table 4). More applicants said they worked most with DNR engineers than with DNR permit writers during the permit application process.

**Table 4. DNR Staff that facility worked with most in preparation of permit**

	<b>Percent</b>
Local/regional DNR permit writer	36%
Local/regional DNR engineer	58
Non-local/non-regional DNR permit writer	5
Non-local/non-regional DNR engineer	1

Municipal facilities were more likely to work with engineers than were industrial facilities. Major industrial facilities were most likely to work with non-local engineers and non-local permit writers.

## II.B. The Permit Application Process

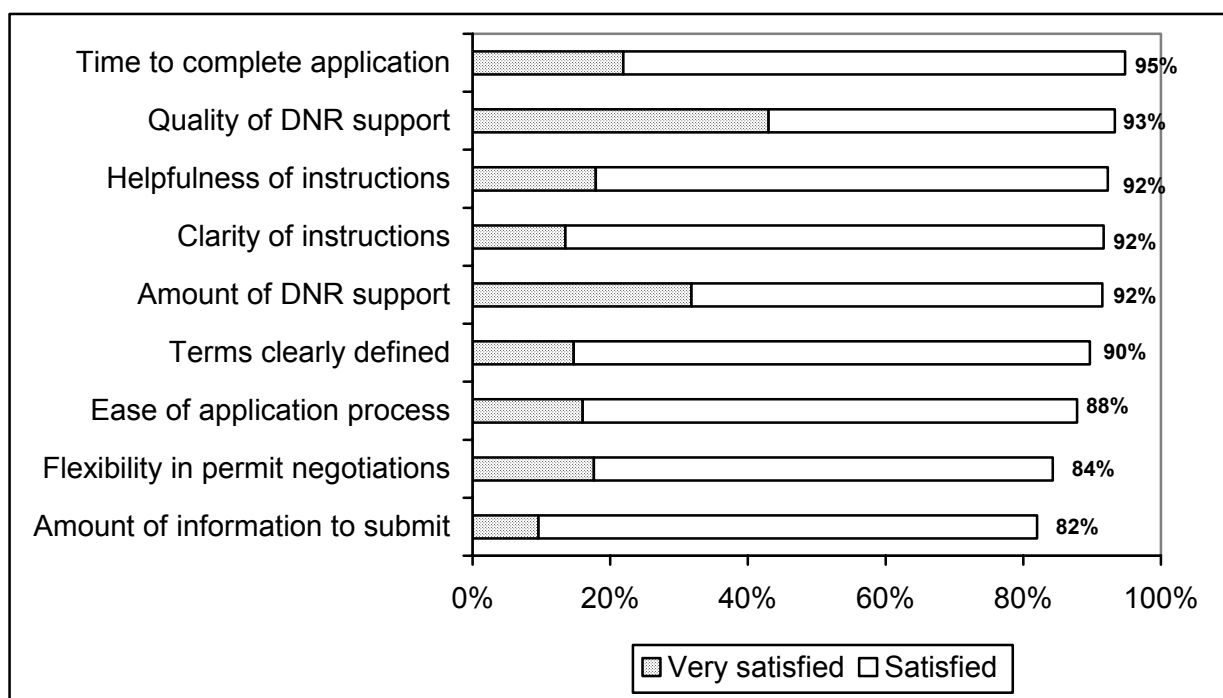
### ***Most respondents are satisfied with the application process.***

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Ninety one percent of respondents said they were satisfied, overall, with the application process.

Specifically, in-depth interviews identified nine different attributes associated with the permit application process. These are displayed in Figure 3. The survey results show that a strong majority of applicants (80% or more) were satisfied. They were most satisfied with the time allowed to complete their application, with DNR support, and with the helpfulness and clarity of application instructions. They were marginally less satisfied with the flexibility shown by the agency during permit negotiations and with the amount of information they were required to submit.

**Figure 3. Satisfaction with the application process**



Minor industrial facilities were slightly less satisfied than the other groups with most application process attributes. They were especially less satisfied with the helpfulness of application instructions.

***Applicants place importance on several application process attributes.***

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After rating selected application attributes, the survey asked applicants to rank the two most important attributes. Table 5 presents the results of their rankings. It shows that applicants placed similar of importance on the first five attributes shown in the table: DNR support, flexibility in negotiations, clarity of application instructions, and ease of the application process.

**Table 5. Most important and 2<sup>nd</sup> most important application process attributes**

	<b>Most and 2<sup>nd</sup> most important (Sum)</b>
Amount of DNR support during application process	49
Flexibility in permit negotiations	48
Quality of DNR support during application process	44
Clarity of application instructions	43
Ease of application process	42
Helpfulness of application instructions	20
Amount of information required to submit	17
Time allowed to complete application	16
Regulatory terms clearly defined	11

***Municipals are more likely to prefer paper applications.***

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The survey asked applicants to identify how they would prefer to receive and submit their WPDES permit applications. Respondents could identify paper, diskette, WEB, or email preferences. Table 6 groups preferences by paper and electronic options. The table shows that municipal facilities resoundingly favored receiving and submitting paper applications.

While the majority of minor industrial facilities also favored paper, more of them expressed electronic preferences than did municipal facilities.

Major industrial facilities strongly supported electronic receipt of applications. The data also suggest that major industrial facilities were divided between preferring paper or electronic submittal of their applications.

**Table 6. Preferences for permit application receipt and submittal**

	Industry		Municipals	
	Major	Minor	Major	Minor
<b>Preferences for application receipt</b>	(n=5)	(n=51)	(n=15)	(n=82)
Paper	20%	61%	73%	87%
Electronic	80	39	27	13
<b>Preferences for application submittal</b>	(n=5)	(n=50)	(n=14)	(n=82)
Paper	40%	58%	71%	85%
Electronic	60	42	29	15

***Applicants mostly referred to permit instructions, DNR staff, and consultants in order to complete their permit.***

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The survey asked applicants to identify the information sources they used in order to complete their permit application. Applicants relied on two main sources of information: permit instructions, and DNR staff. To a lesser extent, they also rely on consultants when completing their permit application (see Table 7). Of those who identified an 'other' source, one-third (33%) said they used their old permit as a source of information for preparing their new permit application.

**Table 7. Sources used while completing permit application**

	<b>Percent</b>
Instructions which accompanied permit	84%
DNR staff	64%
Consultants	36%
Information on the DNR WEB site	7%
Trade groups/partnerships (ex. MEG, Paper Council)	4%
Facility list-serves	4%
Other	9%

## II.C. The Permit

### ***Applicants are generally satisfied with their final permit.***

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The survey asked applicants to rate three issues related to the final WPDES permit they receive. Table 8 shows that respondents were most satisfied with 'ease of understanding the permit' (93% 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'), and slightly less satisfied with the 'ease of identifying changes to permit' (88%) and 'permit conditions fair and consistent' (85%).

**Table 8. Satisfaction with permit**

	Percent
<b>Ease of understanding the permit</b>	
Very satisfied	20%
Satisfied	73
Dissatisfied	6
Very dissatisfied	--
<b>Ease of identifying changes to permit</b>	
Very satisfied	19%
Satisfied	69
Dissatisfied	12
Very dissatisfied	--
<b>Permit conditions fair and consistent</b>	
Very satisfied	16%
Satisfied	69
Dissatisfied	13
Very dissatisfied	2

Minor industrial facilities were less satisfied than the other groups with the ease of identifying changes to their permit. Minor municipal facilities were the most satisfied.

***Applicants said that personalized explanations of their permit is important.***

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Four-fifths (80%) of applicants said that it is ‘very important’ or ‘important’ that DNR staff go over their final permit with them (see Table 9). Roughly one-half of respondents (54%) said that a DNR staff person did go over their final permit with them. Of those who did not receive an explanation, one-half (51%) would have liked one.

**Table 9. Personalized permit explanations**

	<b>Percent</b>
<b>DNR staff explained final permit</b>	54%
<b>Would have liked an explanation (those who said they did not get one)</b>	51%
<b>Importance of staff going over final permit</b>	
Very important	46%
Important	34
Unimportant	19
Very unimportant	1



## II.D. Problems with Application Process and with WPDES Permit

### **Few *major*, somewhat more *minor* application process problems.**

The survey asked applicants to look at a list of problems related to the WPDES permit application process and to the permit itself. Applicants were then asked to identify the problems of greatest and second greatest concern. Not surprisingly, few respondents reported major application process or permit-related problems. The WPDES permit program is a well-established program that has changed little in recent years. Generally, limits on wastewater discharges are less constraining than are air program limits, for example. Additionally, one-half of the respondents to this survey have worked with the program for ten years or longer and are familiar with it.

### **Application process problems**

For all but one listed application process problem, roughly three-fourths of respondents said that they did not have a problem (see Table 10). Less than 10 percent of respondents identified any of the problems as a *major* problem. More applicants cited *minor* problems, with “the amount of information required to submit” the most frequently cited minor problem.

Minor industrial facilities were more likely to have problems with the time to prepare the application and with the amount of information required to submit.

**Table 10. Problems with WPDES permit application process**

	<b>Major Problem (Percent)</b>	<b>Minor Problem (Percent)</b>	<b>Not a Problem (Percent)</b>
Amount of information required to submit	6%	40	54
Costs incurred during process	6%	23	71
Time for DNR to process application	4%	21	75
Time to prepare application	3%	26	71

More respondents identified ‘amount of information required to submit’ as a concern (26) than any other problem (see Table 11). Incidentally, this is also the problem that most respondents identified as a minor problem.

**Table 11. Permit application problems of greatest and second greatest concern**

	<b>Greatest and 2<sup>nd</sup> Greatest Concern (Sum)</b>
Amount of information required to submit	26
Costs incurred during process	14
Time for DNR to process application	14
Time to prepare application	9

***Most respondents did not have a major problem with their WPDES permit.***

Fewer than one-fifth of respondents identified a *major* problem with the WPDES permit. Table 12 shows that more respondents (15%) reported that 'costs associated with compliance' was a major problem than any other problem. Over one-half of respondents did not have a problem with any of the problems listed.

Major industrial facilities, and to a lesser extent, minor industrial facilities, were more likely to have problems with reporting required by the permit.

**Table 12. Problems with WPDES permit**

	<b>Major Problem (Percent)</b>	<b>Minor Problem (Percent)</b>	<b>Not a Problem (Percent)</b>
Costs associated with compliance	15%	27	58
Permit limits	9%	33	58
Reporting required by permit	4%	32	63
Permit compliance	4%	22	74
Frequency of collecting monitoring data	4%	26	70
Ease of understanding permit	2%	30	68

When asked to identify the permit problems of greatest and second greatest concern, respondents pointed to 'permit limits' and 'costs associated with permit compliance' more than any other issue (see Table 13). These are also the two problems that respondents identified most often as 'major problems'.

**Table 13. Permit problems of greatest and second greatest concern**

	<b>Greatest and 2<sup>nd</sup> Greatest Concern (Sum)</b>
Permit limits	37
Costs associated with permit compliance	30
Reporting required by permit	20
Frequency of collecting monitoring data	17
Permit compliance	16
Ease of understanding permit	14

### ***Problems cluster around small groups of facilities.***

Researchers wondered whether problems were spread somewhat evenly among applicants or whether a small cluster of facilities experienced/reported a large number of problems. Tables 14 and 15 show the percentages of facilities that reported problems according to the number of problems they reported (categories of one, two, three, etc.). The tables also show the percentages of total problems that facilities in each category claimed. The shaded areas represent clustering of multiple problems. Both application process problems and permit problems are included here.

Table 14 shows that three-fourths (73%) of respondents did not identify any major problems. The table also shows that although only four percent of facilities reported four or five major problems, these facilities represent 29% of all problems reported. This would suggest that a small number of facilities, then, are indeed experiencing, or at least reporting, a disproportionate share of problems.

**Table 14. Major problems, by facility**

<b>Number of major problems reported by facility</b>	<b>Facilities (Percent)</b>	<b>Total number of problems (Percent)</b>
No major problems	73%	0%
One major problem	11	18
Two major problems	7	26
Three major problems	5	26
Four or five major problems	4	29

As regards to minor problems, Table 15 shows that one-fifth (21%) of facilities did not report any minor problems. As with major problems, we see a slight clustering effect with minor problems. Table 15 shows that one-fourth of facilities (23%) reported roughly one-half (54%) of the minor problems.

**Table 15. Minor problems, by facility**

<b>Number of minor problems reported by facility</b>	<b>Facilities (Percent)</b>	<b>Total number of problems (Percent)</b>
No minor problems	21%	0%
One minor problem	15	5
Two minor problems	17	12
Three minor problems	13	14
Four minor problems	11	15
Five or more minor problems	23	53

## II.E. Problem Resolution

### ***Most applicants are satisfied with how DNR staff addressed their problem.***

The survey asked a series of questions related to how the DNR resolves problems raised by WPDES applicants. One-half (51%) of respondents said they contacted the DNR about one of the listed problems they had experienced. Major municipal facilities were slightly less likely to do so. Three-fourths (74%) of those respondents who contacted the DNR said they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with how the DNR addressed their problem (see Table 16).

**Table 16. Overall satisfaction with how DNR addressed problem**

	Percent
Contacted DNR staff about a problem	51%
Very satisfied	28%
Satisfied	46
Dissatisfied	24
Very dissatisfied	2

Table 17 shows that respondents contacted the DNR about all but one of the problems identified earlier. The problems raised with the DNR most frequently are related to permit limits.

**Table 17. Problems brought to DNR staff's attention**

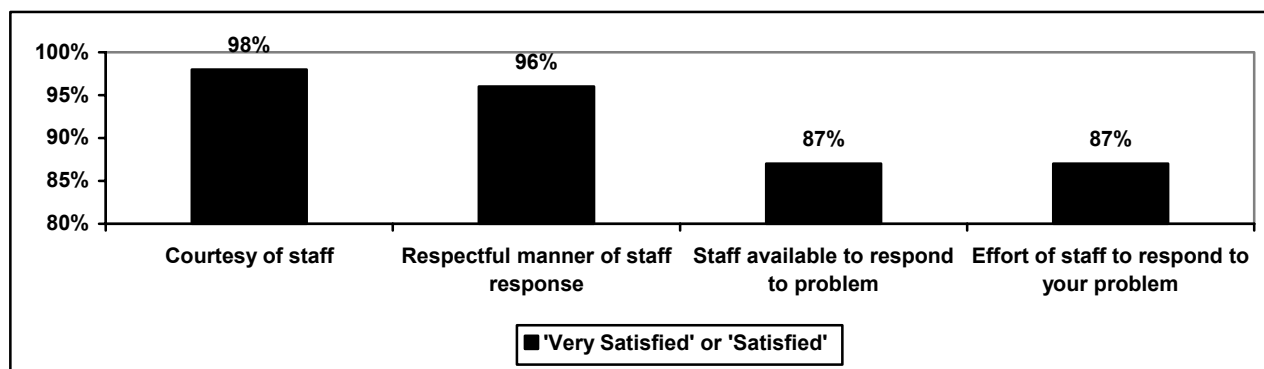
	Percent
<b>Application process</b>	
Amount of information required to submit	9%
Time to prepare application	5
Time to process application	7
<b>Permit</b>	
Permit limits	35
Permit compliance	11
Reporting required by permit	11
Costs associated with permit compliance	9
Ease of understanding permit	5
Frequency of collecting monitoring data	4
Other	4

***Permit applicants think highly of DNR staff's response to problems.***

---

We asked applicants to rate the performance of DNR staff in responding to their problem. Figure 5 shows that DNR staff performed well in the opinion of respondents. Four-fifths or more respondents were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the four selected attributes of staff performance.

**Figure 5. Satisfaction with DNR staff's performance in response to problems**



Major industrial facilities and major municipal facilities were more satisfied with staff availability and effort than were the other groups.

***DNR staff responded to concerns in a timely manner, generally providing what was needed.***

---

Once they contacted the DNR about their problem, three-fourths (77%) reported that their problem was addressed in a timely manner, and roughly one-half (54%) of respondents said they received most of what they needed as a result of their contact (see Table 18).

**Table 18. Response information and timeliness**

	<b>Percent</b>
Problem was addressed in a timely manner	77%
Most of what we needed	54%
Some of what we needed	32
None of what we needed	14

***Suggestions for how DNR staff could have better handled a problem varied considerably.***

---

Recall that one-fourth of those who contacted the DNR about a problem reported dissatisfaction with how their problem was handled. The survey asked those applicants to comment on how the DNR could have better handled it their problem. A content analysis found that most comments were related to wastewater regulations. Some commented on time issues, and a few others commented on application issues. See Table 19.

**Table 19. Comments in response to how problem could have been better handled**

	Percent
Problems with regulations	40%
Time issues	27
Application issues	27
Other	6

Some written comments are included below.

**Problems with regulations**

Rather than addressing staff's approach to problem resolution, several respondents wrote about regulatory issues. Comments touched on various limits and rules, the cost of frequent testing, and the need for better data providing a reason for limits.

*I would be satisfied if effluent limit for arsenic would be less than S.D.W.A. limit. Also, BOD and SS frequency of tests requiring 24-hour time lapse increases lab costs.*

*My argument isn't with the staff but DNR rules regarding chemical additives in the outfall water.*

**Time issues**

Comments related to time addressed poor timing of permit receipt, timely responses to agreements and timely response to various letters of request and concerns.

*We received our permit only a few days before it became effective. It would have been nice to have had more time to prepare for new permit conditions.*

*Agreed to solutions have yet to be finalized in writing. Corrections to reports submitted to this office have not been made. ... This is well after the station visit (2 months).*

**Application issues**

Comments about application issues are also varied. They include consideration of specific situations, and one-on-one DNR help with the application.

*Work one on one to complete application.*

*Staff said they could not consider our situation. The rules did not allow it. We have petitioned for a review of our permit as it is unreasonable and overly costly for what would be gained.*



## II.F. Site Visits

### ***DNR engineers are more likely than permit writers to visit facilities.***

We asked applicants whether their permit writer and their DNR engineer visited their facility in the 12 months prior to receiving the survey. Four-fifths (80%) said that their DNR WPDES engineer visited their site, as opposed to one-half (51%) who said that the permit writer had visited their site (see Table 20). Minor municipal facilities were less likely than the other groups to report that a permit writer had visited their site.

**Table 20. Site visits by DNR Staff**

	<b>Percent</b>
Permit writer visited facility	51%
DNR WPDES engineer visited facility in last 12 months	80%

Applicants viewed site visits both by permit writers and by WPDES engineers as important. However, Table 21 shows that more applicants (85%) said that visits by DNR engineers are important than said that visits by permit writers are important (75%). Minor municipal facilities were more likely than the other groups to view visits by DNR WPDES engineers as important.

**Table 21. Importance of DNR staff site visits**

	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Permit writer site visits</b>	
Very important	35%
Important	40
Unimportant	24
Very unimportant	1
<b>DNR WPDES engineer site visits</b>	
Very important	38%
Important	47
Unimportant	13
Very unimportant	1

***Applicants who were visited by DNR staff are more likely to place importance on such visits.***

---

Figures 6 and 7 show that applicants who experienced site visits were more likely to place importance on those visits than those who did not experience a visit. This is especially true of those who were visited by a permit writer. Just over 9 in 10 (93%) applicants who experienced site visits by permit writers said that those visits are 'very important' or 'important' (see Figure 6). This is compared to the 55 percent of applicants who were not visited who said that such visits are 'very important' or 'important'.

**Figure 6. Importance of permit writer visiting site, by visited or not**

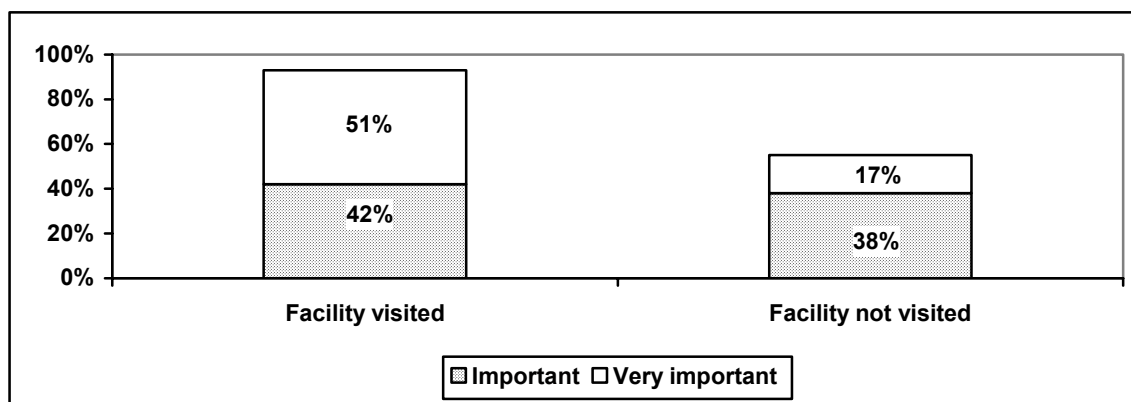
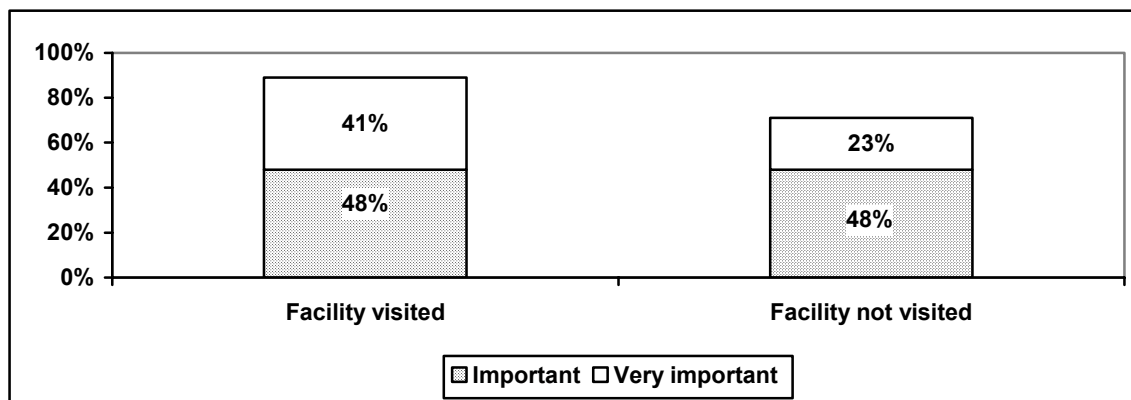


Figure 7 shows that roughly nine in ten (89%) of those respondents who experienced DNR WPDES engineer visits said that they are 'very important' or 'important'. Somewhat fewer of those whose facilities were not visited by a DNR engineer (71%) placed similar importance on such visits.

**Figure 7. Importance of DNR WPDES engineer visit, by visited or not**



## II.G. Engineer visits

***Most applicants reported that DNR WPDES engineers visited their facilities to conduct compliance inspections.***

---

The survey asked applicants a number of questions about visits to their facilities by DNR WPDES engineers. Four-fifths (80%) of respondents said that a DNR WPDES engineer visited their facility in the 12 months prior to receiving this survey.

During our interviews with facilities, WPDES permit recipients said that DNR engineers do more than simply inspect facilities during their visits. They also share information, and provide assistance with the permit application and with monitoring issues. The survey asked applicants to identify the primary purpose for the DNR engineer's visit to their facility. As expected, most (54%) of those respondents whose facilities were visited said the engineer was there to conduct a compliance inspection (see Table 22). Table 22 also shows that respondents identified other reasons for engineer visits.

**Table 22. Reasons for DNR WPDES engineer site visits**

	<b>Percent</b>
DNR WPDES engineer visited facility	80%
<b>Reason for visit</b>	
Compliance inspection	54%
Assistance with monitoring issue	12
Permit application assistance	9
Some other assistance	9
Share information	8
Other	8

Most of those who listed some "other" reasons for engineer visits said that the visits were to meet a new DNR engineer or for the DNR engineer to meet a new operator.

***Most applicants reported satisfaction with their inspection visits.***

Almost all respondents (96%) said they were ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ with the DNR engineer’s visit (see Table 23).

**Table 23. Overall satisfaction with DNR WPDES engineer visit**

	<b>Percent</b>
Very satisfied	56%
Satisfied	40
Dissatisfied	4
Very dissatisfied	--

In addition to asking overall satisfaction with the engineer’s visit, the survey asked applicants to rate their engineer on courtesy, helpfulness and the provision of information. Just as applicants were satisfied with DNR WPDES engineer site visits overall, they also described engineers as courteous, helpful, and informative (see Table 24).

**Table 24. Satisfaction with selected inspection performance attributes**

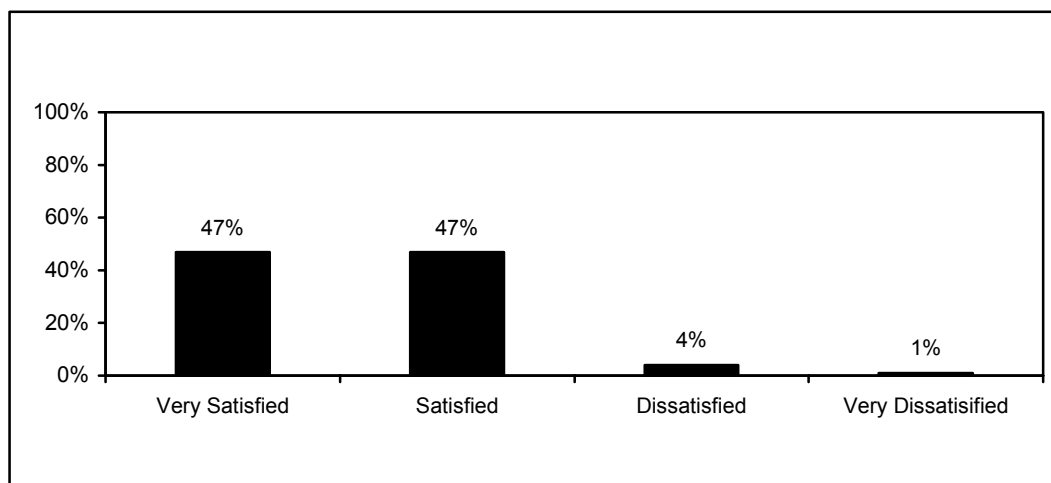
	<b>Very Satisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>
<b>Courtesy</b>	68%	32	--	--
<b>Helpfulness</b>	50%	45	5	--
<b>Provision of information</b>	44%	50	5	1

## II.H. Providing Information and Answering Questions

### ***Applicants are satisfied with the timeliness of DNR staff's responses to their questions.***

The SIP directs the DNR to establish a baseline for timely response to customer concerns, and to improve DNR response times by 2005. To that end, the survey asked applicants a series of questions about the timeliness of DNR staff's responses to their questions. Seventy percent of respondents said they contacted DNR staff about a question related to their permit in the 12 months prior to receiving their survey. Figure 8 shows that over nine in ten of those who contacted staff were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the timeliness of DNR staff's responses to their questions. Major municipal facilities were marginally less likely than the other groups to be satisfied with the timeliness of staff's response.

**Figure 8. Satisfaction with timeliness of staff's responses to questions**



When asked to identify which of the provided topics applicants contacted the DNR about, applicants identified a variety. More respondents (29%) said they contacted the DNR about limitations or restrictions in their permit than any other topic (see Table 25).

**Table 25. Most recent question topic asked of DNR staff in last 12 months**

	Percent
Limitations or restrictions in permit	29%
Reporting	21
Information required for permit	18
Monitoring	17
Draft permit	6
Time until permit complete	1
Other	6

***DNR staff answer questions in a timely manner.***

---

We asked applicants who contacted the DNR about a question to tell us when they expected a response to their question and when they actually received one. Most respondents (89%) said that DNR staff responded to their question when they expected or sooner. Table 26 shows that roughly one-half (55%) said that DNR staff's response time was what they expected and one-third (34%) reported that DNR staff responded sooner than expected.

**Table 26. Actual versus expected response times to applicant questions**

	<b>Percent</b>
Actual response was sooner than expected	34%
Actual and expected response the same	55
Actual response was later than expected	11

***A minority of those applicants with questions sought answers on the WEB site.***

The survey asked applicants a few questions about using the DNR WEB site to find answers to their questions. Table 27 shows that one-fifth (18%) of those applicants who contacted the DNR about a question turned to the DNR WEB site for answers. Major industrial facilities were more likely than the other groups to use the WEB. Just over one-third (37%) reported finding most of what they needed on the WEB, and nine in ten said that navigating the DNR WEB was 'not at all' or 'not very' difficult.

**Table 27. Experience with DNR WEB**

	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Searched the DNR WEB-site for answers to a question</b>	18%
<b>Extent that respondents found answers on the WEB</b>	
Found most of what was needed	37%
Found some of what was needed	63
Found of none of what was needed	--
<b>Navigational difficulties on WEB-site</b>	
Not at all difficult	20%
Not very difficult	70
Difficult	5
Very difficult	5

## II.I. Written Suggestions for Program Improvement

### ***Many respondents discuss some method of simplifying the process.***

The survey provided permit applicants with space to comment on what, if anything, the DNR could do to improve the WPDES program. One-third (36%) of respondents elected to comment. Several respondents commented on the desire to simplify the WPDES permit application process. Some mentioned the need for help and for better application instructions, while others discussed longer permit periods and problems with DNR delays (see Table 28). Written comments from these and other topic areas are included below.

**Table 28. Comments on how the DNR could improve WPDES program**

	Percent <sup>1</sup>
Simplify application process	22%
Time issues	12
Better instructions and application help	10
Existing program works well as is	10
Provide means for electronic application/reporting	10
Consistency and flexibility	10
Educate	7
Permit review	5
Other	14

(1) Percentages do not add to 100 because comments could be included in more than one category.

### **Simplify application process**

Several respondents commented on simplifying the application process. Others suggested reducing the amount of information required for the permit applications.

#### Simplify

*Simplify the permit application process for facilities that are renewing permits.*

*“Brevity is the soul of wit”. Keep it simple!*

#### Clarity

*Make sure everything is clear and easy to understand.*

#### Resubmitting the same information

*Don't ask for information already on file with the DNR. It takes a lot of time to assemble the requested information.*

#### Amount of information to be submitted

*Reduce the volume of information that must be submitted. It's all previously documented. Application should only deal with what, if anything, has changed.*



## **Time issues**

Respondents commented that they would like longer permit periods and that they expected DNR to meet deadlines just as they are.

### Longer permit terms

*A longer time limit between permits.*

### Meet deadlines

*The DNR should meet its deadlines in terms of issuing new permits. The permit was received 1.75 years after the expired permit.*

*If we have to apply 180 days before expiration how come DNR takes a long time after expiration date to issue new permit?*

## **Help and instructions for completing application**

Comments include calls for the DNR to work more closely with permit applicants, and for providing better instructions.

### Provide help

*Work to complete each application with applicant.*

### Better instructions

*Simplify instructions as we are not engineers or up to date on terms used.*

*If pre-permit testing is required, send a reminder as to time frame and testing responsibility.*

*Have better instructions and use a little common sense for permit testing requirements. This way the testing burden is not so great.*

## **Program works well**

Some respondents commented that the WPDES permit program works well.

*Runs very smooth.*

*Over last +20 years, permit program has generally been good relative to regulation...*

## **Electronic application/reporting**

Although the majority said they prefer paper applications, some permit applicants suggested establishing the means to submit permit applications and monitoring reports electronically.

*Provide a means for submitting monitoring reports electronically.*

*Standards should be worked out so a means of electronically processing data can be developed. Electronic applications are capable of delivering to both regulators final values of high quality. Other benefits include:*

- *Greatly reduced data entry errors*
- *Dependable and unfailing calculations*
- *Faster delivery (especially if Web or email based)*
- *Reduction in labor*
- *A standard and consistent data electronic reporting format is a mechanism that can provide a high level of data analysis.*

### **Consistency and flexibility**

A few respondents called for more consistency in the program while some wanted permit flexibility.

#### Consistency

*Being more consistent on a statewide basis.*

#### Flexibility

*Be more flexible to understand unusual circumstances and the ability to use discretion in setting discharge levels that make sense.*

### **Educate**

A few respondents would like the DNR to educate elected municipal officials about wastewater issues, and a few others call for greater DNR understanding of certain processes.

#### Educate officials

*Provide informational literature to elected officials on the WPDES permit process and its necessity to regulate WWTFs.*

#### Greater DNR understanding

*Have a better understanding of the remediation system workings and the general site conditions to more directly associate permit requirements to actual environmental hazards.*

## II.J. Background

### ***Regulatory responsibilities, the role of consultants, and additional background.***

In addition to asking WPDES permit applicants questions about the WPDES permit application process and about the permit, the survey asked applicants to provide some information about themselves. This subsection includes information about applicant staff regulatory responsibilities and their use of consultants as well as more basic background information.

Most facilities do not assign one single person to work full-time with regulatory responsibilities. Two-thirds of respondents (68%) say that the person in their facility with regulatory responsibilities assumes non-regulatory duties as well. Fourteen percent say that no one in their facility is regularly assigned to regulatory responsibilities (see Table 29).

The WPDES permit program is an established program, having been in place for 30 years. Indeed, as we heard in the interviews, many facility operators are quite familiar with the program, having worked with it for a number of years. Table 29 shows that roughly one-half (54%) of respondents reported that they have worked with the program for over ten years.

**Table 29. Regulatory responsibilities and time with WPDES program**

	Percent
<b>Person who handles regulatory responsibilities</b>	
Outside consultants handle some/most regulatory responsibilities	28%
Person has regulatory responsibility but also works on non-regulatory duties	68%
Person in firm is assigned to work full time with regulatory responsibilities	11%
No single person is regularly assigned to regulatory responsibilities	14%
<b>Number of years respondent has worked with WPDES program</b>	
Less than one year	4%
One to two years	11
Three to five years	16
Six to ten years	15
More than ten years	54

Table 30 shows that two-thirds (74%) of facilities participating in the WPDES permit program employ fewer than 50 people. Roughly one in ten (9%) were involved in DNR enforcement actions during the 12 months prior to receiving the survey, and roughly one-fifth (17%) of respondents are responsible for obtaining WPDES permits for multiple facilities. In addition to the WPDES permit program, respondents are involved with other DNR programs, principally drinking water and ground water, and respondents received WPDES permits from each of the DNR regions including the central office.

**Table 30. More background information**

	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Number of people in facility</b>	
Fewer than 50	74%
50 – 99	8
100 – 249	8
250 – 499	4
500 or more	4
Did not report number	2
<b>Involved in DNR enforcement action</b>	9%
<b>Respondents who are responsible for obtaining WPDES permits for multiple facilities</b>	17%
<b>Involvement in other DNR Programs</b>	
WPDES permits	100%
Drinking water and groundwater	46%
Air operating permits	22%
Hazardous waste	14%
Solid waste	13%
<b>Facility types</b>	
Major industry	5%
Minor industry	32
Major municipal	11
Minor municipal	51
Minor septic	1
<b>DNR Region where facility received permit</b>	
Central office	10%
Northern	18
Northeast	23
West central	24
South central	15
Southeast	10

### **III. COMPLETION OF SIP OBJECTIVES**

This study was undertaken, in part, to meet the objectives of the Department's Strategic Implementation Plan. These objectives include measuring customer satisfaction, monitoring response times for customer questions, and tracking customer satisfaction with the way staff resolve their concerns and complaints. The SIP set the following benchmarks for each of these:

- Develop a means to measure customer satisfaction and achieve an 85 percent rate of customer satisfaction by 2007.
- Establish acceptable response times for customer questions and meet those response times by 2005.
- Establish a baseline for customer satisfaction with problem resolution and achieve steady increases in customer satisfaction between 2002 and 2007.

Section III discusses survey results in light of these SIP benchmarks.

### III.A. Customer Satisfaction

#### ***The WPDES permit program is meeting most of its goals for satisfaction.***

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The SIP requires programs to establish tools for measuring customer satisfaction with the goal of achieving 85 percent customer satisfaction by 2007. As noted in the introduction, this study focuses on a single type of interaction between the DNR and the regulated community: the issuance of a WPDES permit. There is, however, no single, simple measure of customer satisfaction for such a complicated interaction. The interviews disclosed different facets of participation including the performance of the staff, the structure of the permitting process, and the clarity of the final permit issued.

Table 31 shows that the WPDES Permit Program is currently meeting or exceeding SIP satisfaction goals for almost every area of customer satisfaction measured. The only performance measures which even begin to fall short of the SIP goals are the application process attributes 'amount of information required to submit' (82%) and 'flexibility in permit negotiations' (84%). The shaded percentages in the difference column represent the two issues that fall short of the SIP satisfaction target.

**Table 31. Results achieved versus SIP goals**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Percent Satisfied*</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Satisfaction with DNR staff who processed permit</b>			
Overall satisfaction with DNR staff who processed permit	93%	85%	+8%
Knowledge of WPDES permit rules	97%	85%	+12%
Courtesy	97%	85%	+12%
Accessibility	94%	85%	+9%
Helpfulness	91%	85%	+6%
Knowledge of facility	87%	85%	+2%
<b>Satisfaction with aspects of application process</b>			
<b>Overall satisfaction with WPDES application process</b>	91%	85%	+6%
Time to complete application	95%	85%	+10%
Quality of DNR support	93%	85%	+8%
Amount of DNR support	92%	85%	+7%
Clarity of application instructions	92%	85%	+7%
Helpfulness of instructions	92%	85%	+7%
Terms clearly defined	90%	85%	+5%
Ease of application process	88%	85%	+3%
Flexibility in permit negotiations	84%	85%	-1%
Amount of information required to submit	82%	85%	-3%
<b>Satisfaction with attributes of WPDES permit</b>			
Ease of understanding permit	94%	85%	+9%
Ease of identifying changes to permit	88%	85%	+3%
Permit conditions fair and consistent	85%	85%	0%
<b>Satisfaction with attributes related to DNR WPDES engineer visit</b>			
Overall satisfaction with WPDES engineer visit	96%	85%	+11%
Courtesy	100%	85%	+15%
Helpfulness	95%	85%	+10%
Provision of information	94%	85%	+9%

\*Percent 'Very satisfied' or 'Satisfied'.

### III.B. DNR Staff Handling of Customer Problems

#### ***The WPDES Program performs well in handling customer problems.***

---

The SIP calls on programs to track "disappointed" customers and to establish a baseline measurement for their treatment. For the purpose of this study, 'disappointed customers' were defined as those who contact the DNR with a problem or complaint. The SIP also states that these customers 'will be let down gently'. This study defined 'letting down gently' as responding to customers in a timely manner with effort, courtesy and respect, while providing the information needed.

Table 32 presents an overview of how DNR staff resolved customers' concerns and complaints about their operating permits. This table shows the following:

- One-half of applicants contacted DNR staff with a problem.
- One-half of those who made such a contact got 'most of what they needed' as a result of their contact.
- Roughly three-fourths (77%) said their problem was addressed in a 'timely manner'.
- Three-fourths (74%) said they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the way staff addressed their problem.
- Those who contacted staff about a concern or complaint gave staff high marks for courtesy and respectful response.



**Table 32. Resolution of & satisfaction with resolution of concerns**

	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Contacted the staff with a problem</b>	
Yes	51%
No	49
<b>Applicant got help that they needed from contact</b>	
Most of what was needed	54%
Some of what was needed	32
None of what was needed	14
<b>Problem was addressed in a timely manner</b>	
Yes	77%
No	23
<b>Satisfaction with the way problem was addressed</b>	
Very satisfied	28%
Satisfied	46
Dissatisfied	24
Very dissatisfied	2
<b>Very satisfied or satisfied with staff performance</b>	
Courteous response	98%
Respectful response	96%
Staff available to respond to problem	87%
Effort to resolve problem	87%

## Determinants of satisfaction

Two issues drive customers' satisfaction with staff's efforts to help them: how quickly their problem was resolved and how successful they were in getting the help they needed. The most satisfied customers were those who got most of the help they needed in a timely manner. The least satisfied were those who had to wait, and then didn't get the help they needed.

Tables 33 and 34 show how these two determinants of satisfaction affect customer satisfaction with how DNR staff resolved their problem. The tables show that:

- Table 33 shows that ninety seven percent of those who got *most* of the help they needed were satisfied. Comparatively, only 13 percent of those who got *none* of what they needed were satisfied with how DNR staff resolved their problem.
- Table 34 shows that eighty eight percent of those who received a timely response were satisfied. Comparatively, only 31 percent of those who had to wait for a response were satisfied with how DNR staff resolved their problem.

**Table 33. Effect of response quality on satisfaction with problem resolution**

	<b>Most of what needed</b>	<b>Some of what needed</b>	<b>None of what needed</b>
<b>Satisfied*</b>	97%	65%	13%
<b>Dissatisfied**</b>	3	35	87

\*Percent 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'.

\*\*Percent 'very dissatisfied' or 'dissatisfied'.

**Table 34. Effect of timeliness of response on satisfaction with problem resolution**

	<b>Response was timely</b>	<b>Response was not timely</b>
<b>Satisfied*</b>	88%	31%
<b>Dissatisfied*</b>	12	69

\*Percent 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'.

\*\*Percent 'very dissatisfied' or 'dissatisfied'.

### III.C. Timeliness of Responses to Customer Questions

#### ***WPDES Program staff are timely in their response to customer questions.***

The SIP directs programs to establish baselines that define timely responses to customer concerns, questions and complaints. It then directs programs to work towards actually meeting those objectives. The goal is a 20% reduction in response time by 2005 (See Appendix A for exact language).

Researchers suggest that an acceptable response time is one that meets or exceeds customer's expectations. Do customers get an answer when they think they should? With that definition in mind, we suggest that the response time target be that 85% of customers who contact the DNR receive a response when they expect one or sooner.

This survey suggests that the WPDES Permit Program is exceeding the goal set by customer expectations. All told, 89% of those who contacted the DNR about a question received a response to their question when they expected it or sooner (see Table 35).

**Table 35. Results achieved versus SIP goals**

	Percent	Target	Difference
<b>Applicants who received a response when expected or sooner</b>	89%	85%	+4%

# **APPENDIX A**

## **DNR STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN OBJECTIVES**

## **Strategic Implementation Plan Objectives Addressed by Study**

### **People 2a Subobjective**

*By 2002, using customer and staff input, acceptable response times for customers concerns, questions and complaints will be established. By 2005, we will decrease our response time to these by 20% from the base year 2002. In circumstances where our DNR colleagues are our customers, we will hold ourselves to the same standard as for external customers.*

### **People 2b Subobjective**

*By 2002, we will establish an instrument for measuring customer satisfaction and we will strive to increase the satisfaction level by 10% per year (as compared to the previous year) through 2007 with a goal of meeting 85% satisfaction. In circumstances where our DNR colleagues are our customers, we will hold ourselves to the same standards as for external customers.*

### **People 2c Subobjective**

*By 2002, we will establish an instrument for specifically surveying “disappointed” customers to learn how they feel they were treated in the process. We will establish a baseline for our courteous, respectful treatment of these unhappy customers and increase our ability to “let them down gently” by 5% per year through 2007.*

# **APPENDIX B**

## **SURVEY RESULTS BY FACILITY TYPE**

## **Appendix B**

Appendix B includes a series of tables that present survey results by facility type. The facility type 'minor septic' is not included in the tables because there are only two cases. Each table corresponds with a Section II subsection, and is labeled accordingly. For example, 'Table II.A. DNR staff' includes the results, stratified by facility type, that are found in subsection II.A. DNR Staff.

## II.A. DNR staff

	Major industry	Minor industry	Major Municipal	Minor Municipal
<b>Satisfied,* overall, with staff who processed permit</b>	100%	91%	82%	95%
	(N=5)	(N=55)	(N=17)	(N=80)
<b>Satisfaction with attributes of staff performance</b>				
Knowledge of WPDES permit rules	100%	100%	100%	97%
Courtesy	100%	96%	100%	99%
Accessibility	100%	94%	94%	97%
Helpfulness	100%	91%	94%	94%
Knowledge of facility	80%	87%	93%	92%
<b>Most important staff performance attributes**</b>				
Knowledge of WPDES permit rules	2	36	14	45
Courtesy	0	5	0	4
Accessibility	1	14	0	16
Helpfulness	3	28	8	39
Knowledge of facility	2	25	12	51
<b>Staff worked with most (Percent)</b>				
Local/regional DNR permit writer	40%	45%	29%	30%
Local/regional DNR engineer	--	47	65	69
Non-local/non-regional DNR permit writer	40	8	6	--
Non-local/non-regional DNR engineer	20	--	--	1
	(N=5)	(N=53)	(N=17)	(N=78)

\*Percent 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'

\*\*Sum of most important and second most important



## II.B. Satisfaction with application process

	Major industry	Minor industry	Major Municipal	Minor Municipal
Satisfied,* overall, with application process	80%	90%	88%	93%
	(N=5)	(N=52)	(N=17)	(N=82)
<b>'Very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with specific attributes of process</b>				
Time allowed to complete application	100%	96%	94%	94%
Quality of DNR support during application process	100%	86%	100%	96%
Helpfulness of application instructions	100%	84%	94%	96%
Clarity of application instructions	100%	82%	94%	96%
Amount of DNR support during application process	100%	86%	100%	94%
Regulatory terms clearly defined	100%	84%	88%	93%
Ease of application process	60%	82%	82%	94%
Flexibility in permit negotiations	80%	82%	82%	86%
Amount of information required to submit	80%	75%	71%	89%
<b>Most important application process attributes**</b>				
Time allowed to complete application	1	4	3	8
Quality of DNR support during application process	1	13	5	25
Helpfulness of application instructions	--	7	--	12
Clarity of application instructions	2	15	3	21
Amount of DNR support during application process	--	17	5	26
Regulatory terms clearly defined	--	7	2	2
Ease of application process	2	12	6	21
Flexibility in permit negotiations	3	17	5	23
Amount of information required to submit	0	5	4	8

\*Percent 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'

\*\*Sum of 'most important' and 'second most important' attributes

## II.B (cont.). Application preferences and information sources

	Major industry	Minor industry	Major Municipal	Minor Municipal
<b>Preference for <u>receiving</u> permit application*</b>				
Paper	20%	61%	73%	87%
Diskette	20	14	7	7
WEB	20	16	7	4
Download from WEB	40	10	13	2
	(n=5)	(n=51)	(n=15)	(n=82)
<b>Preference for <u>submitting</u> permit application*</b>				
Paper	40%	58%	71%	85%
Diskette	20	10	7	2
WEB	--	10	14	4
Download from WEB	40	22	7	9
	(n=5)	(n=50)	(n=14)	(n=82)
<b>Sources of information for completing application*</b> (could identify more than one option)				
Instructions which accompanied permit	80%	87%	94%	82%
DNR staff	--	9%	12%	5%
Consultants	20%	46%	53%	27%
Information on the DNR WEB site	60%	65%	88%	57%
Trade groups/partnerships	40%	2%	6%	3%
Facility list-serves	--	2%	6%	5%
Other	40%	11%	--	8%

\*Percent

## II.C. Satisfaction with permit and permit explanations

	Major industry	Minor industry	Major Municipal	Minor Municipal
<b>Satisfaction with permit*</b>				
Ease of understanding the permit	100%	96%	94%	94%
Ease of identifying changes to permit	80%	80%	88%	95%
Permit conditions fair and consistent	100%	85%	82%	85%
<b>DNR staff went over final permit</b>	40%	57%	63%	50%
	(N=5)	(N=54)	(N=16)	(N=78)
<b>Would have liked staff to go over permit (if staff did not go over it)</b>	33%	41%	67%	45%
	(N=3)	(N=22)	(N=6)	(N=38)
<b>Staff explanation of permit is important**</b>	60%	80%	88%	79%
	(N=5)	(N=55)	(N=17)	(N=78)

\*Percent 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'

\*\*Percent 'very important' or 'important'

## II.D. Problems with application process and permit

<b>Application process problems</b>	<b>Major industry</b>	<b>Minor industry</b>	<b>Major Municipal</b>	<b>Minor Municipal</b>
<b>Amount of information required to submit*</b>				
Not a problem	20%	43%	59%	64%
Minor problem	80	46	29	35
Major problem	--	11	12	1
	(N=5)	(N=54)	(N=17)	(N=81)
<b>Costs incurred during application process*</b>				
Not a problem	60%	69%	59%	77%
Minor problem	40	24	29	19
Major problem	--	7	12	4
	(N=5)	(N=54)	(N=17)	(N=80)
<b>Time for DNR to process application*</b>				
Not a problem	40%	65%	94%	82%
Minor problem	60	28	6	17
Major problem		7	--	1
	(N=5)	(N=54)	(N=17)	(N=82)
<b>Time to prepare application*</b>				
Not a problem	50%	63%	82%	75%
Minor problem	20	35	6	24
Major problem	--	2	12	1
	(N=5)	(N=54)	(N=17)	(N=81)
<b>Application problems of greatest concern**</b>				
Amount of information required to submit	--	15	3	8
Costs incurred during application process	1	4	3	6
Time for DNR to process application	1	6	0	6
Time to prepare application	0	3	2	3

\*Percent

\*\*Sum of 'greatest concern' and 'second greatest concern'

#### II.D. Problems with application process and permit (cont.)

<b>problems RELATED TO PERMIT</b>	<b>Major industry</b>	<b>Minor industry</b>	<b>Major Municipal</b>	<b>Minor Municipal</b>
<b>Ease of understanding permit (N = 5, 53, 17, 81)</b>				
Not a problem	60%	58%	77%	73%
Minor problem	40	38	23	25
Major problem	--	4	--	2
<b>Permit compliance costs (N = 5, 54, 17, 81)</b>				
Not a problem	40%	54%	59%	64%
Minor problem	60	26	12	27
Major problem	--	20	29	9
<b>Reporting required by permit (N = 5, 54, 17, 80)</b>				
Not a problem	20%	56%	71%	71%
Minor problem	60	39	29	25
Major problem	20	5	0	4
<b>Permit limits (N = 5, 54, 16, 81)</b>				
Not a problem	40%	52%	56%	64%
Minor problem	60	43	31	25
Major problem	--	5	13	11
<b>Monitoring data collect frequency (N = 5, 53, 17, 81)</b>				
Not a problem	40%	62%	65%	79%
Minor problem	60	30	35	18
Major problem	--	8	--	3
<b>Permit compliance (N = 5, 54, 16, 81)</b>				
Not a problem	80%	70%	81%	74%
Minor problem	--	28	19	20
Major problem	20	2	--	6
<b>Permit problems of greatest concern**</b>				
Costs associated with permit compliance	1	10	6	12
Permit limits	2	11	4	20
Reporting required by permit	4	7	0	9
Permit compliance	1	4	0	11
Frequency of collecting monitoring data	0	6	3	8
Ease of understanding permit	0	7	1	5

\*Percent 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'

\*\*Sum of 'greatest concern' and 'second greatest concern'

## II.E. Problem resolution

	Major industry	Minor industry	Major Municipal	Minor Municipal
<b>Contacted DNR about a problem</b>	60%	55%	39%	49%
	(N=5)	(N=40)	(N=13)	(N=51)
<b>Satisfied, overall, with how staff addressed problem*</b>	67%	67%	80%	79%
	(N=3)	(N=21)	(N=5)	(N=24)
<b>DNR performance in responding to problems*</b>				
Effort of staff to respond to problem (N=3,20,5,24)	100%	85%	100%	87%
Courtesy of staff (N=3,20,5,24)	100%	100%	100%	96%
Staff available to respond to problem (N=3,19,5,24)	100%	74%	100%	96%
Respectful manner of staff response (N=3,20,5,24)	100%	100%	100%	92%
<b>Got what was needed as result of contact</b>				
Most of what needed	--	48%	50%	68%
Some of what needed	67%	38	50	16
None of what needed	33	14		16
	(N=3)	(N=21)	(N=6)	(N=25)
<b>Problem was addressed in timely manner</b>	33%	71%	100%	84%
	(N=3)	(N=21)	(N=6)	(N=25)

\*Percent 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'.

## II.F. Site visits

	Major industry	Minor industry	Major Municipal	Minor Municipal
<b>Permit writer visited facility*</b>	60%	65%	59%	39%
	(N=5)	(N=55)	(N=17)	(N=81)
<b>DNR engineer visited facility*</b>	80%	76%	100%	79%
	(N=5)	(N=55)	(N=17)	(N=77)
<b>Permit writer visit 'very important' or 'important'</b>	60%	80%	82%	70%
	(N=5)	(N=55)	(N=17)	(N=80)
<b>DNR engineer visit 'very important' or 'important'</b>	80%	76%	88%	93%
	(N=5)	(N=54)	(N=17)	(N=81)

\*Percent

## II.G. Engineer visits

	Major industry	Minor industry	Major Municipal	Minor Municipal
<b>DNR engineer visited facility*</b>	80%	76%	100%	79%
	(N=5)	(N=55)	(N=17)	(N=77)
<b>Reason for visit*</b>				
<b>Compliance inspection</b>	75%	37%	70%	59%
<b>Share information</b>	--	7	12	9
<b>Assistance with monitoring issue</b>	--	20	--	9
<b>Permit application assistance</b>	--	18	--	7
<b>Some other assistance</b>	25	10	6	8
<b>Other</b>	--	8	12	8
	(N=4)	(N=40)	(N=17)	(N=59)
<b>'Very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with engineer's visit, overall**</b>	100%	95%	94%	97%
	(N=4)	(N=39)	(N=16)	(N=62)
<b>Satisfaction with Engineer visit performance**</b>				
Courtesy (N= 4, 39, 16, 62)	100%	100%	100%	100%
Helpfulness (N= 4, 39, 15, 61)	75%	92%	94%	98%
Provision of information (N= 4, 39, 16, 61)	75%	92%	94%	97%

\*Percent.

\*\*Percent 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'.



## II.H. Providing information and answering questions

	Major industry	Minor industry	Major Municipal	Minor Municipal
<b>Contacted staff about permit question*</b>	100%	72%	71%	68%
	(N=5)	(N=54)	(N=17)	(N=55)
<b>Satisfaction with timeliness of staff's responses to questions**</b>	100%	95%	83%	96%
	(N=5)	(N=42)	(N=12)	(N=55)
<b>Actual versus expected response time to applicant questions*</b>				
Actual response was sooner than expected	--	33%	--	42%
Actual and expected response the same	100%	53	78%	51
Actual response was later than expected	--	14	22	7
	(N=2)	(N=36)	(N=9)	(N=45)
<b>Searched WEB site for answers to a question*</b>	20%	19%	25%	15%
	(N=5)	(N=41)	(N=12)	(N=54)

\*Percent.

\*\*Percent 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'.

## II.J. Background

	Major industry	Minor industry	Major Municipal	Minor Municipal
<b>Who handles regulatory responsibilities*</b>				
Outside consultants handle some/most (N=5,49,13,81)	20%	35%	8%	28%
Person in facility has regulatory responsibilities but also has non-regulatory duties (N=5,49,13,81)	100%	67%	85%	64%
Person in facility is assigned to work full-time with regulatory issues (N=5,49,13,81)	--	16%	8%	9%
No single person is regularly assigned regulatory responsibilities (N=5,49,13,80)	--	10%	15%	17%
<b>Number of years respondent has worked with WPDES program*</b>				
Less than one year	--	4%	--	5%
One to two years	--	15	--	12
Three to five years	--	24	6%	14
Six to ten years	60%	16	--	15
More than ten years	40	41	94	54
	(N=5)	(N=54)	(N=17)	(N=81)
<b>Involved in enforcement actions*</b>	20%	7%	6%	10%
	(N=5)	(N=55)	(N=17)	(N=82)
<b>Respondent responsible for multiple facilities*</b>	40%	25%	6%	14%
	(N=5)	(N=55)	(N=17)	(N=81)
<b>Region (where permit processed)*</b>				
Central Office	80%	22%	--	--
Northeast	--	20	23%	26%
Northern	--	18	--	23
South Central	20	15	24	15
Southeast	--	11	41	4
West Central	--	14	12	33
	(N=5)	(N=55)	(N=17)	(N=82)

\*Percent.